

## Moving Ahead

## In This Issue:

**A Garden of Transportation Choices***From C-Tran to Gwinnett County Transit, new options are sprouting up* 1**GRTA and ARC Sign Historic Agreement***Memorandum of Understanding formally establishes partnership* 2**C-TRAN Bus Service Celebrates 500,000 Riders***Number of riders more than double expectations* 3**Heavy Duty Vehicle Survey To Be Conducted***Study will assess air pollution emissions* 4**Upcoming Public Meetings***Don't miss GRTA's November board meeting* 4

# A Garden of Transportation Choices

Looking back over the three years I've served with the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), I'm amazed at the number of new transportation choices that are popping up in metro Atlanta to help relieve the drought of alternatives to only having a car. And there are even more choices on the horizon.

**Consider:**

- A new regional vanpool program begins this fall with 40 GRTA vans augmenting private fleets already operating in the region and supported by a region-wide marketing effort;
- C-TRAN, Clayton County's local bus service operated by GRTA, will expand its routes before the end of the year;
- MARTA has opened its Windward Parkway park-and-ride lot providing relief to GA 400 commuters;
- Gwinnett County Transit will begin offering local bus service after a year of phenomenal support for its express service;
- Cobb Community Transit offers a new fleet of clean-fuel buses;
- After a series of public meetings on planning a Northwest transit line, GRTA is on track to recommend next spring a transportation alternative connecting Midtown Atlanta with Cumberland and Town Center;
- New construction or improvements to key arterial roads for 11 counties participating in the Regional Express Bus System are beginning

this fall with the express bus system beginning operations next year.

In addition, work continues on a regional trip planning system that you can access over the Internet or by phone, and a Smart Corridor project that will demonstrate how technology can improve traffic flow without the time and expense of building more traffic lanes.

Challenged at its creation in 1999 with improving metropolitan Atlanta's transportation network, GRTA is moving toward 2003 with a significant number of accomplishments under its belt.

Perhaps most important, federal funds for transportation improvements are flowing into the region. GRTA helped return full use of federal transportation funds to the region when it worked with its planning and transportation partners to create, in 2000, a conforming Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Those programs, and subsequent conforming TIPs, have allowed the use of more than \$6.3 billion of federal transportation funds based on the region's plans rather than as federal partners might decide. ■



*Dr. Catherine L. Ross  
Executive Director*

# GRTA and ARC Sign Historic Agreement

**T**he Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formally establishing a unique partnership between a regional planning agency and a regional transportation and air quality project implementing agency. Both agencies were enthusiastic over the agreement, reinforcing their commitment to work together to plan and implement regional blueprints and policies for improving metro Atlanta's mobility and air quality.

"As we are the region's principal transportation authorities, it is important that we have an agreement that sets out what our responsibilities are in order to prevent duplications," said GRTA Chairman Walter M. Deriso. "The MOU is part of the ongoing process of working together to accomplish our appointed goals."

"Any time two different agencies are able to agree to work together is a plus for the citizens of Georgia," said ARC Chairman Crandle Bray. "This is a positive step forward as our two agencies continue to create more ways to work and interact closely together."

The principle ideas forming the basis of the MOU were initially proposed during a joint ARC/GRTA board retreat held in February of this year. The boards agreed that in order to achieve the best results for the region, GRTA and ARC must be well coordinated in terms of schedules, information exchange and decision-



Chick Krautler, ARC Director, Catherine L. Ross, GRTA Executive Director, Walter "Sonny" Deriso, GRTA board chairman and ARC Chairman Crandle Bray sign the MOU.

making to eliminate duplicate or overlapping efforts, and public confusion over the two agency's roles.

"This understanding cements the commitment both our organizations have to effective regional stewardship," said Dr. Catherine L. Ross, GRTA executive director. "It reinforces at the board level the efforts both our staffs have made to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the quality of life for all Georgians."

Following the formal signing of the MOU, Chairman Bray appointed GRTA board members Steve Bruning and Michael Tyler to serve on ARC committees. Bruning will serve on the Transportation and Air Quality Committee and Tyler on the Environment and Land Use Committee. ■

## MOU Highlights

1. The Chairs and Executive Directors of both agencies will meet together at quarterly scheduled meetings.
2. Chairs will inform their respective Boards as meetings take place, and will advise the Boards about the substance of discussions as necessary.
3. The Executive Directors of both agencies will meet together, along with key staff, at monthly scheduled meetings.
4. ARC and GRTA will schedule joint meetings of the Boards when appropriate, but not less than one per year.
5. A GRTA board member will sit on the ARC Transportation & Air Quality Committee (TAQC) and the Environmental & Land Use Committee (ELUC).
6. Each agency will amend their respective by-laws, if necessary, to allow the Director or Executive Director to address the other's Board or Committees.

For the complete highlights of the MOU, please visit the GRTA web site, [www.grta.org](http://www.grta.org).

## GRTA Launches Vanpools

**A**nother transportation choice is being expanded and enhanced for metropolitan Atlantans. Later this year, Atlanta's fleet of 175 vanpools will expand with the addition of Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) vanpools.

Working with current private and public vanpool operators, the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Clean Air Campaign, GRTA has set a goal of raising the number of vanpools operating in the region to 350 by the end of 2005. GRTA will initially provide 40 vans for use by vanpoolers. GRTA vanpool fares are expected to be similar to those charged by private providers.

A Maryland Department of Transportation study estimates that generally each vanpool takes the place of as many as 12 cars on the road. Fewer cars on the road mean less airborne pollutants, which leads to better air quality for everyone. ■



One of the 40 new vans rolling out for the new regional vanpool initiative.

## C-TRAN Bus Service Celebrates 500,000 Riders

**P**atronage of Clayton County's C-TRAN local bus service more than doubled expectations in less than a year of operation as the service recorded its 500,000th rider (passenger trip) in late September.

Dr. Catherine L. Ross, executive director of GRTA, noted the success of the new bus system bodes well for the other transportation alternatives the agency is developing.

"We are thrilled with the progress of the C-TRAN system," said Dr. Ross. "We began this service because we recognized there was a gap in the transportation fabric for this area. The ridership numbers prove that if we provide transit alternatives for people, they are willing to make use of the options available to them."

The current C-TRAN system consists of 12 low-floor, handicapped-accessible, 43-passenger buses that are also equipped with bike racks. The buses have two regular routes that cover the cities of Riverdale, Forest Park, Jonesboro, Morrow, Lake City and portions of College Park.

Over the next two years, C-TRAN will grow to include 36 buses and two additional routes. Public meetings were held throughout the spring of this year to gather public



GRTA Public Affairs Specialist Nadara Wade welcomes one of C-Trans' 500,000 riders.

comments and suggestions for the new routes. Additional public meetings will be held this fall to introduce the additions to the service and gather more feedback from the public. ■





## Your chance to be heard...

Citizens are encouraged to attend the monthly GRTA Board of Directors and committee meetings. The Board is happy to hear from citizens and sets aside time at the beginning of their monthly meetings for citizen comments (limited to three minutes per person or group).

## Heavy Duty Vehicle Survey To Be Conducted

**T**he Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (EPD), and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), has commissioned the Georgia Institute of Technology to perform a study assessing the air pollution emissions from heavy-duty vehicles and equipment operating throughout the Atlanta region and evaluating cost-effective strategies to reduce those emissions.

"There is no doubt that reduced emissions and cleaner air leads to healthier lives for all Georgians, especially those with asthma or other lung or heart diseases," said Dr.

Catherine L. Ross, GRTA executive director. "Our goal is to find cost-effective ways to reduce emissions, and this study will help us do just that."

The study began in September and will run for 10 months, through the end of June 2003. It will provide a detailed inventory of heavy-duty on-road and nonroad vehicles and equipment operating in the Atlanta region, including their numbers, types, ages and current and anticipated levels of activity. Rob Goodwin, Ph.D., an Air Quality Specialist at GRTA, is the project manager.

GRTA and its partners will utilize the inventory information to develop a cost-benefit analysis of various strategies for controlling emissions. ■



245 Peachtree Center Avenue, Suite 900  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Printed on Recycled Paper 

**GRTA Board of  
Directors meetings**

**Fourth Quarter  
of 2002**

**November 7**

GRPP/PMT 1:30 p.m.

**November 13**

DRI Committee 9:30 a.m.

Operations & Finance

Committee 10:00 a.m.

Planning & Projects

Committee 11:00 a.m.

Board Meeting 1:00 p.m.

**December 5**

GRPP/PMT 1:30 p.m.

**December 11**

DRI Committee 9:30 a.m.

Operations & Finance

Committee 10:00 a.m.

Planning & Projects

Committee 11:00 a.m.

Board Meeting 1:00 p.m.

GRTA Board meetings  
are webcast live  
at the GRTA website—  
[www.grta.org](http://www.grta.org)

## Contact Us!

Phone: (404) 463-3000

Fax: (404) 463-3060

E-mail:

[comments@grta.org](mailto:comments@grta.org)

Internet:

[www.grta.org](http://www.grta.org)

*It is the mission of  
GRTA to provide the  
citizens of Georgia  
with transportation  
choices, improved  
air quality, and  
better land use in  
order to enhance their  
quality of life and  
promote growth that  
can be sustained by  
future generations.*